NAQCC News

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1. CHALLENGE: Our May challenge is our annual(?) milliwatt challenge. Simply make as many QSO's as possible using milliwatt power, i.e. less than 1 watt output AND a simple wire antenna. See the rules for other details, but I will mention here that to be considered as a milliwatt QSO, the contact MUST be INITIATED using milliwatt power. You can't start a QSO with higher power then reduce to milliwatt power.

Continuing this month everyone who completes the challenge and reports their results according to the rules is entered into a drawing to win one of the remaining sets of the bug or paddle handle pieces donated by Gregg WB8LZG. The winner gets to select which variety of pieces he or she needs for their particular bug or paddle. Please let us know when you submit your results if you don't want to be included in the drawing for any reason whatsoever (perhaps you don't own a bug or paddle). Otherwise you will be included, and if you win and then aren't interested, we'll have to go through the effort of a second drawing.

In case you are thinking about entering our challenges, but are not quite sure what to think about them, please read this quote about the April challenge from a first-time participant, Mike KC2LYQ.

"I had a great time completing this challenge. This is my first time working on an NAQCC challenge, and it definitely won't be my last. It got me to be much more active than I usually am, and it was one of the best amateur radio experiences I've had so far in my four years of being licensed."

Full Challenge info here.

2. APRIL SPRINT RESULTS: Once again an excellent sprint. The bands co-operated nicely, even 20M where there were 83 QSO's in the logs I cross-checked. Personally I found 80M to be just about the best I've ever seen it for a sprint. I ran off 25 QSO's in 48 minutes just sitting on one frequency and calling CQ. We broke our three major sprint records, logs, participants,

and QSO's for the second month in a row. See the stats below. I'm very proud of all of you who participated, and even more proud if you participated AND sent in your log. We had a good many western USA stations show up in the logs, but only a couple sent in a log. Tom and I are puzzled by that. We hope our idea of having separate divisions in our sprints based on time zones will increase west coast participation since those of you in say, the Pacific time zone will only be competing against your fellow Pacific time zone members for one of our nice certificates and a 1 in four (or 5) chance of winning any physical prizes involved. More about that is now posted in the general sprint rules, and also mentioned again in the club news below.

We continue to receive very positive response to our detailed cross-checking of sprint logs. I think there was a little hesitancy at the beginning because many hams were used to just sending in a total of QSO's made in some other sprints, and they didn't like having to submit a full complete log to our sprints. But now, with the use of GenLog and our autologger, it is so to speak, a piece of cake. So much so that I am overwhelmed by logs received within an hour or so of the end of a sprint. I've even automated the cross-checking process to a great extent and it takes very little time to cross-check logs now, even as the number of logs continue to increase. The only thing that takes time is when I receive a log that doesn't conform exactly to what we require for straight cut and paste into our cross-checking Excel spreadsheet. Then I have to manually edit the log which takes time. So thanks to everyone who takes the time to make sure their log conforms with our template as described clearly in the general sprint rules (or simply submits the correct GenLog file as their log).

Enough blabbing from me. (Was that a loud "Right On!" I just heard?) Let's look at the impressive stats now.

STATS - current month, previous month, all time record, mo/yr (blue indicates a record set this month):

Logs -	**62**	**61**	**62**	**4/08**
Stns in logs -	**104**	**103**	**104**	**4/08**
Hour 1 QSO's -	**500**	**432**	**500**	**4/08**
Hour 2 QSO's -	**398**	**449**	**449**	**3/08**
Total QSO's -	**898**	**881**	**898**	**4/08**
20M QSO's -	**83**	**5**	**163**	**8/07**
40M QSO's -	**602**	**581**	**602**	**4/08**
80M QSO's -	**213**	**295**	**481**	**12/07**
Autologger logs -	**54**	**52**	**54**	**4/08**

WINNERS:

1st SWA - KG4W
2nd SWA - n/a
1st Gain - K4BAI
Special Award (Making 5 or more QSO's each band) - none
Top Non-Winner - W4ONC
K7QO CD winner - KA8MPT

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because that shows the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few

QSO's. Those reports are important also.

We had 10 stations who didn't submit a log show up from 5 to 12 times in the 62 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 10 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log.

We welcome 13 hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:
AA8XX, AD5VC, K3HPS, K4PQC, KC2MHU, KI6OFN, N1PQ, N1QLL, N8ZYA, NV9X, W3TS, WD5INA, WK8S

Full sprint info here.

3. AWARD WINNERS THE PAST TWO MONTHS:

N1LU/4 - 1000MPW #0037
VE3HUR - 2xQRP 250pts #0007
VE3HUR - Alpha Prefix USA Honor Roll - 73 prefixes
VE3HUR - QSO-a-Day 30days 2008 #0001
VE3HUR - Worked Members Advanced #0006
K3WWP - Worked Members Advanced - Endorsed for 1,000 pts

We hope to add your call to the list of award winners soon. Special thanks and congratulations to Don VE3HUR for his interest and accomplishments in our awards program.

Full List of all award winners here.

4. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- Shortly after the NAQCC was formed back in October 2004, a ham with the call of W2LJ, Larry Makowski took it upon himself to promote the club in several different ways. When Tom and I learned of his efforts, we decided to make him the official Publicity Officer for the NAQCC if he was interested in such a position. Larry did accept, and it's largely due to his efforts in untiringly promoting the club that the NAQCC is where it is at today, the largest QRP/CW club in the world.

However Larry recently changed jobs, and also wanted to cut back on some activities to spend more time attending to family duties such as his children's schooling. With those responsibilities and pressure from the new job, Larry submitted his resignation as Publicity Officer for the club, effective May 1st.

We are proud of Larry for the job he has done for us, and also for his correct sense of priorities. Taking care of a family in this day and age should be the number 1 priority for anyone. There is so much danger lurking everywhere, especially for children. We will miss Larry and the wonderful job he did, both before and after becoming Publicity Officer.

- It did not take long to find a 'replacement' for Larry. Although he left some big shoes to fill, we believe we have found someone who can fill them quite well. We welcome Dave Raycroft VA3RJ as our new Publicity Officer.

I (K3WWP) have known and been friends with Dave since the 1960's when he was VE3BMR and both of us were fairly new hams. Dave's attention to detail and dedication to a job are perhaps unequalled by anyone. I know those traits will make him an excellent Publicity Officer. We look forward to the growth of the NAQCC continuing at the same pace as it did under Larry's efforts.

- Larry was one of our newsletter emailers as well as Publicity Officer. He is also relinquishing that duty, so we are looking for a new newsletter emailer. If you think that sounds like something interesting that you would like to do, please let us know via email to **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** as soon as possible.

Briefly, the duties would include making two group emailings a month to approximately 400-500 members. You would be assigned the group of members with numbers 1001-1500, and email to all who haven't unsubscribed or otherwise no longer are on the email list. You would maintain your own list of email addresses for your group after we supply the initial version to you. There is an excellent group email program called PIMEX that you could easily learn and use for the job if you are not already familiar with group emailings. The time spent on the job would be only a very few hours each month, perhaps 3-4 at the most.

- (by Tom, WY3H) Guess what's coming in June besides the first day of summer?

That's right, Field Day!

Anyone living in or near western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, southwestern NY, or northern W Va. (oh heck, anywhere for that matter) is welcome to sign up for the first NAQCC QRP Field Day.

Providing we can get enough operators signing up we will hold the event on my property in Armstrong County (western) Pennsylvania. The event will be strictly primitive -- a porta-potty and primitive camping -- battery power (a generator if someone brings one). There are trees to string random wire or dipoles -- whatever. Somewhat rough access to property but not that difficult. Any takers?

For details e-mail Tom, WY3H, NAQCC 0001, at: **TJMITCHELLKX3@COMCAST.NET**

Please reply by May 31 at the latest.

- To paraphrase Tom, "Guess what's coming in May besides a lot of flowers?". It's the FISTS spring sprint. We urge all our NAQCC members to enter this sprint on May 10th. We are very proud to work so well together with the greatest of all CW clubs, FISTS to help preserve CW on the ham bands. We also urge those of you who are not a member of FISTS, to consider joining this fine organization. For more info on FISTS, see http://www.fists.org/. Oh, and if you're going to Dayton, be sure to look up the FISTS booth and say hello and mention you're from the NAQCC. I'm sure you'll be welcomed with open arms.

- Our system of updating our membership list info directly from the FCC Amateur Radio database is working out quite well. However we still need you to notify us whenever you change info, especially your email address as that is not included in the FCC database yet. If you don't notify us, you may stop receiving the email newsletter, and we may not be able to send you any certificates or notify you of any prizes you have earned. In that case, the prizes would go to someone else instead of you, the rightful winner.

- Thanks to the generosity of yet another of our wonderful members, we have another item

to give away. Paul N8XMS donated a book of ham radio cartoons. Tentative plans are to give it away in conjunction with an alphabet challenge involving cartoon character names, probably in August of this year. Of course, we'll be more specific as the plans are finalized and the time draws nearer.

- I'm delighted to have just signed up as a new member, #2348, Cal K0DXC. Cal is one of a rare and seemingly vanishing breed - a teenager who loves and uses CW. Cal is 13 years old. If you'd like to know more about him, check my (K3WWP) personal web site (k3wwp.com) in the CW section - Teens and CW page.

- Ever since we started our sprints we have struggled with ideas to help our west coast USA members to be able to participate more regularly. It's hard to come up with a 2 hour time frame that is convenient for everyone across 4 different time zones. In the USA, it's going to either be too late for the East Coast members, or too early for West Coast members. We feel a two hour time frame is ideal for a weeknight sprint, and don't want to change that. Anything longer cuts into other activities for a lot of members. So that will stay the same, and not be increased.

We did try a 4 hour sprint time frame with participants operating a 2 hour frame of their choice. Only a few participants made any QSO's outside the first 2 hours. We also asked if the west coast members would like an extra sprint if someone from there would volunteer to do all the work involved in running it. No one stepped forward to offer.

Now we are going to give another idea a try. We will award a certificate to the winner in each time zone in our SWA category. That way it will be like 4 mini sprints within our sprint. In effect, EST members will only compete against other EST members, PST members only against other PST members, etc. Just as in 'local' sports rivalries, e.g. Browns-Steelers, Yankees-RedSox, or in-state rivalries among hams in the big ham radio contests, this will allow participants in each time zone to set up 'rivalries' among themselves for top score in their particular time zone. Hopefully this will increase PST/MST participation enough to allow even those members who don't care about scores to have more of a chance to make QSO's with their fellow members.

The GAIN category will remain the same with one nationwide winner since so far, only a very tiny percentage of participants enter in that category.

If we have giveaways in conjunction with the sprints, we'll have a drawing among the 4 (5 if we have GAIN category entrants) winners to see who wins the prize.

There will no longer be any 2nd place or Top Non-Winner certificates issued. Our Special Award certificates will continue along the same guidelines as for the giveaways described in the previous paragraph.

This whole idea will be implemented for the May sprint on a trial basis, and will continue if successful.

Just another innovative idea from the 'Club With A Difference', the NAQCC.

5. MEMBER NEWS: I still continue to get many personal emails from members telling me of their QRP exploits, or asking me a question about this or that aspect of QRP/CW operation. I can't figure out why instead of writing me, you don't make the info into a news item and send it to Paul for the newsletter. I know there are a lot more folks who enjoy reading about your exploits, and who may be able to answer your questions besides me. Not that I don't enjoy

doing it, but this section is a much better forum for that info than only my email inbox. So send a brief description of your accomplishments and/or your questions to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET** so he can convert it into a news item like those here.

- **From John K3WWP #0002** - I'm now using a new rig here thanks to the kindness of club member and good friend Mike KC2EGL. It's a Kenwood TS-480SAT set to 5 watts output. After using it a couple weeks now, I believe it does a better job of pulling signals through my noise level than did the TS-570. It also has 6 meters which the 570 doesn't, so I hope to be making QRP/CW QSO's on yet another band soon. Right now, I'm having some problems on 6 meters with RF getting into my keyer and a couple other electronic gadgets I have around here. I'll have to solve that problem when I get the time - hopefully before the prime time for sporadic E skip comes soon.

The 480 came here just a couple days after I hit consecutive day # 5,000 in my streak of making QSO's using QRP/CW/simple wire antennas.

I've been working more DX with the 480 than I have for a while, as playing with a new toy is getting me on the air more often, especially at different times of the day when the DX is there. I've worked 12 countries or entities so far in about 10 days of using the 480.

- **From John N8ZYA #2066** - I took my Icom 703 QRP rig with me while traveling recently near New York City. I also took an "end fed dipole" cut for 10-20-40 meters. It is made by the PAR company and it is just the right length to install in the upstairs attic. The "coax end" was just a few feet outside the "attic ventilation window", and was easily run down the side of the house and into the living room, where the radio sat on an old desk. The antenna was oriented towards the east and west.

This month, the "solar flux" has been a little more cooperative. I think the bands are beginning to change, and are more favorable for longer distance contacts.

This has been an incredible radio year for me. I've worked my first DX stations and also had some great QRP CW contacts. Since February, I've worked Jamaica, Poland, Croatia, Italy, and Spain. I've also worked several 40-meter QRP stations at over 1000 miles. (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Texas, and Colorado).

I am desperately trying to work N0TU (The Goat Man) in Colorado and have actually worked the "Spy" near Pikes Peak. (W0RM). He is using an old CIA spy radio and operates as a "pedestrian mobile".

I've also been successful working my first "QRP Contests". One of my most exhilarating moments this year was hearing my call sign during "The 40 Meter Fox Hunt" from near Houston Texas. That call sign was AE5BH and he was my first "pelt". I also worked Texas in the "Spartan Sprint" (W5ROK) this year.

Needless to say, working a 3 watt station in Florida this year was also a real hoot. (WA3SCM). Dave Slater was using a random wire from a motel room. (my Isotron Antenna was quite enough to hear him). I've also worked a Washington DC 1/2 watt station several times this year. (AI4OT) It looks like a GREAT year for radio and I'm looking forward to many more contacts, as I travel with the radio, and a simple antenna....

I have had so much fun with QRP this year. I recently joined the North American QRP CW Club and will be the featured member in June. I'll be at the Outer Banks in May. I hope my "right on the water" QTH will allow some Caribbean, Mexican, and South American stations for the log book. Last year, from Nags Head, I worked most of the US on 40 meters and 20 meters. I'll be looking forward to the "Solar Flux" increases this summer. I also hope to do some "portable operations" from West Virginia.

Happy Trails. John Smithson N8ZYA / QRP

- **From Randy KB4QQJ #2086** - A Huge, Thank You! My April QRP Party from Caboose X758 was a blast!! I was expecting something like 30 contacts if I was lucky. Well I was swamped, mini pileups at times even. Conditions were great and I worked from Switzerland to

Ecuador. I even received a great photo From Walt LW3EX of "Vagon de cola" in Ecuador.

Thirteen clubs, four countries, 16 states (including KH6AT), and one huge QRP Lighthouse were represented. Sixteen contacts were with other QRP stations. AG4IP Tim, was low watt operator at 2 watts, NAQCC# 2285.

The main goal this outing was a contact with W1FJI Art, who was also portable at the St. Marks Lighthouse in FL. Thanks Art, good contact! My secondary goal was to contact as many different cw club operators as I could. Double Success!! I achieved both goals and had more fun than I have in years, chatting or just exchanging numbers.

The QSL cards are arriving daily and if you need one ASAP for awards, or are interested in the Caboose, drop me an email. It was such fun I'm putting together a special QSL card to represent the Little Red Caboose that I operated from and will start sending them out inApril. I don't have a website but if you are interested in the photos taken let me know and I will email them to you. Some are interesting, some are just shots I snapped as I moved around the Caboose and City Park. Many thanks to all for making my QRP party a great success.

- **From John N6HI #0642** - WOW! Is this cool or what?!? I found a search engine for electronics components: octopart.com. Input a part number, and Octopart outputs sources, prices, and often pdf datasheets and app notes! Go to their site, type in something like LM358N and hit search. This is a very useful resource, especially for the homebrewers.

- **From Paul N8XMS #0675** - On March 29th. I completed my contacts for the SKCC Tribune award (#92). This award requires 50 QSOs made with a straight-key or a bug. Also, all were made using QRP.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.